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D E D I C A T I O N

T O T H E

P U B L I C.

NO! I will not dedicate to
any Prince or Potentate, Lord
or Commoner whatever.

My Dedication is, *To that
discerning Public* alone, to whom
I appeal for the Truth and
Justice of what I advance.

THE AUTHOR.

A

INTRODUCTION.

THAT persons who pretend to call themselves Christians, should persecute those of a different persuasion, is astonishing! But that Protestants, who pique themselves on their lenity to all mankind, and inveigh bitterly against the Church of Rome for her persecuting spirit, should, at a time when there is the least occasion for it, revive a disposition which the general benevolence of the age had almost consigned to oblivion, is so much beyond all credibility, that one scarcely knows how to admit it!

Under the stale pretence of being alarmed at the indulgence granted to Papists, *feeling* for themselves, and, *trembling* for posterity, our Compilers say *, that certain Protestants think it a duty to religion and their country to associate; not, as they pretend, to promote the views of party, or to embarrass the measures of government. Indeed, one may reasonably conclude, it

* There were three principal fabricators of this Appeal, and many assistants.

would add little to the scale of the one, and it is to be hoped will never become sufficiently respectable to give weight to the other. With open mouths they proclaim their loyalty to the throne; and, surprizing it is, their attachment to the happy constitution, the preserver of the rights, liberties, and privileges they enjoy; — blessings they are so jealous of, that with true zealous enthusiasm, they would deprive others of enjoying the same, lest they should lose the satisfaction of indulging in the comparison between luxury and oppression.

They, artfully, set out with observing, that if the doctrine of the Papists was not connected with political tenets of the most dangerous tendency, they might expect the same degree of Toleration with the very numerous sects with which this kingdom abounds; for their ignorance and superstition would rather excite compassion than expose them to the consequences of any penal statutes.

Now, this argument, candidly and impartially investigated, plainly refutes itself, and entirely oversets the whole tendency of the pamphlet in question, and the very intent of this wise Association. For, if the doctrine of the church of Rome “ would rather excite our compassion,” &c. then is there no danger of this kingdom being

ing converted to Popery : and this admitted, the political tenets with which it is connected, of course can have no influence on our constitution. Thus, from the first outset, they refute themselves, and their whole plan appears to be inconsistent and absurd.

That Papists once breathed the spirit of persecution and cruelty to its utmost extent, is too melancholy a truth to be denied ; but it is likewise true, that those who called themselves the Reformed, were not exempt from the same crime ; the Demon of Persecution was gone forth, and they also caught the infection. It was a political contest for power, wherein religion was scandalously prostituted on both sides to cover the artful designs of party.—The wiser part of mankind were, if possible, to be misled by the plausible appearance of religion, and the minds of the weak were to be inflamed with enthusiasm ; for it is presumed, that any one who turns to the first cause of the Reformation, will perceive that the politics of the times, not the sentiments of piety and religion, were the origin of opposition to the tenets of the Church of Rome.

The temper of the times is altered—The spirit of enthusiasm is evaporated—and Protestants now live as peaceably in the precincts of the Royal Pontiff, as Papists do in the purlieus of
St.

St. James's.—It never was the spirit of the Roman Catholic Religion to depose and murder Princes, or massacre their subjects, for being of a different opinion ; a due distinction is to be made between the religion itself and the art and villainy of those who have made it subservient to their ends, and inflamed the minds of the people by perverting its meaning :—And this has been the case in a greater or less degree, in all countries, whatsoever religion may have prevailed.

The interest of individuals is the best security of a state, and from this point alone there is nothing to be apprehended from the toleration of Popery. Besides, an act of parliament is not such an arbitrary decree but it may be over-ruled by another, if it becomes needful. — It may be the doctrine of some, not only to punish the child for its faults, but to hold the rod still over its devoted head, *in terrorem* : how far it may be consistent with the true spirit of benevolence, ever more ready to indulge than oppress, I leave the humane to determine !

We are assured by these Appealers, that it is not the desire of the Association to persecute, but to prevent being persecuted.—This, however, is not more or less, than, “ I will persecute you, lest you persecute me ;” for every page teems too evidently

dently with the spirit or persecution, as will plainly appear.

Or they are quite ignorant of the truth, or guilty of the most false and malicious representation, to mislead the good and well-meaning.

I shall endeavour to shew, that there is nothing to be apprehended from the Toleration in question, which it is always in our power to curtail, whenever it may be necessary. — It is evident, that Popery is declining daily, even in the Papal dominions; and an exotic, as it may be now deemed, is hardly likely to flourish in a foreign climate. Toleration will in time root out the errors of the Church of Rome; but experience may convince us, that opposition gives new vigour to the oppressed.

In these days, there is no fear of the Papists becoming sufficiently powerful to create us any alarms, were they so disposed; and it is our duty, as Christians, to relieve them of those burdens and restrictions which, though wholesome and right, at the time they were imposed, are now become unnecessary and therefore oppressive.

Let us not accuse others of persecution, and be guilty of it ourselves; nor let me be thought
a Pa-

a Papist, pleading the cause of Popery ; for I am
a Protestant, jealous of my civil and religious
liberties, and profess myself

A CHRISTIAN.

A REPLY

A
R E P L Y
T O A N
A P P E A L
F R O M T H E
P R O T E S T A N T A S S O C I A T I O N .

C H A P. I.

OUR Editors divide their Book into sections, I shall give them chapter for section. In the first, they set out with a definition of persecution and toleration. I wish the last stood foremost in the position, as well as in sentiment; but, while the persecutions of which the Papists have been guilty are held forth to us in the most popular and artful manner, to raise humanity and to excite revenge; these Protestants, who pretend to hold such doctrine in abhorrence, too plainly shew how much they would be guilty of it themselves.

“Persecution consists,” say they, “in hurting a man, “who does not deny the divine authority of the Holy “Scriptures,” &c.—It is needless to add more.—Is it then impossible to persecute those who do not believe

in Holy Writ? for many such there are in these kingdoms, who are good and worthy members of society. —Perhaps our Editors think that persecution is no longer such, in such a cause. —And “toleration,” they “add, consists in allowing every man to profess his “own faith, who acknowledges the divine authority of “the Holy Scriptures,” &c. From whence it follows, that Pagans, Mahomedans, Infidels of every denomination, from the moment they set foot in this land of liberty, should, according to their opinion, be persecuted, which God forbid! tho’ “they do not “acknowledge the divine authority of *our* Scriptures:”—And is this toleration? But since the Papists *do* admit it, what grounds for persecuting *them*? Yet, after all this, we are informed, “that persecution, on account of religion, is wicked and absurd, as it serves only to excite the utmost horror and disgust: that it may make hypocrites, but cannot make true converts.”—It is absolutely needless to animadvert on such self-evident inconsistencies!

We are next led into a long detail of Popish persecution, even as far back as the year 1572, when all Europe was involved in the dark veil of ignorance and bigotry, except a few leading people in power, who availed themselves of the weakness of mankind, and the enthusiasm of the times, to persecute and tyrannise over them. — But what are we to conclude from the following apostrophe?

“O Britons! let not the blood of the martyrs be
 “forgotten, or their sufferings effaced from our
 “memories, or from those of our children, to the
 “latest

“ latest posterity !” This is the counterpart of a monumental inscription, which, by some, may be considered as a disgrace to Christianity *. “ O earth ! “ cover not thou my blood !” — This is visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children from generation to generation with a vengeance : but surely it breathes not the spirit of Christianity, or the meekness of the Gospel ! Yet, do they presume to proceed in the same strain, pointing out in the strongest terms, and collecting every incidental occurrence of Popish persecution, while their language shews how little they would fall short of being guilty of the same crime, were they equally vested with the power.

It is certainly not incompatible with the preservation of our civil constitution to tolerate Popery, because no mischief is to be apprehended from such toleration ; for the more it is tolerated the less it will gain ground, as witness the States of Holland, Switzerland, and others, which are by no means overrun with Roman Catholics in consequence.

The allusion to certain passages in N^o. 5. of Sir Richard Steele’s Appendix † to the Romish Ecclesi-

* Vide Allen’s Tomb in Newington Church-Yard.

† Vide Appeal from the Protestant Association, page 14, second edition, which says, “ Heretics may lawfully be spoiled of their goods, though it be better to take them by authority.

“ None are bound to restore what they have been intrusted with by heretics, or to perform any contract made with them.

By Pope Gregory IXth’s constitutions, “ A man by heresy is deprived of all jurisdiction, whether natural, civil, or politic.

“ Heretics may not be termed either children or kindred ; but, according to the old law, “ thy hand shall be upon them to spill their blood.”

The experience of every Mediterranean trader will sufficiently shew the misapplication of the above articles.

astical History, may have had its day ; but it needs only to be observed, in order to refute it, as inapplicable to the present times, that a very considerable number of English and other Protestant merchants, have long resided in every trading town throughout the Papal dominions, not only unmolested, but every encouragement has been held out to them ; Protestants and Roman Catholics have been permitted to intermarry, and under this sole restriction, that the males shall be brought up in the father's, the females in the mother's persuasion.

As to the affair of James the Second, it scarcely demands to be refuted ; his descendants became the tools of foreign powers, who secretly derided their pretensions ; but now, it is well known, the Pretender has lost all influence with the Court of Rome.

I am by no means for supporting the religious tenets of Popery, but, in truth and justice, I must contradict a charge of a most serious nature, replete with ignorance or malice, or, perhaps, both.—It is said to be one of their maxims, “ that no faith is to be kept with heretics,” (which is confined to matters of religion only) therefore the sacred ties of society are not thereby dissolved ; — nor is it true, that dispensations can be obtained for perjury, or the promise of paradise for murder and treason ; pardons are not purchased, nor do the crimes of individuals go unpunished by the civil power. The curious extract of the fees of the Roman Chan-
cery

cery * is grossly misrepresented; they have been given in the second edition of the Appeal, totally different from the first, which proves essentially their want of authenticity; however, I admit there is, and has been, time immemorial, some such thing extant. At a grand conclave held in Rome, at which the Pope presided, it was taken into consideration to curb the wickedness of men, by some wholesome check, exclusive of the civil power. The doctrine of confession was already so sufficiently established, that few ever omitted to acknowledge before the Priest the crimes of which they had been guilty: it was therefore by them considered, that certain fees levied by the confessor upon the crimes and follies of mankind, would be serviceable to their morals, while it would produce a revenue to the state infinitely superior to any poll-tax ever levied; and accordingly an edict passed to that intent:—but the act of confession, or of receiving absolution, by no means exempted the guilty person from the punishment incurred for his crimes by the civil law—It was

* Vide Appeal from the Protestant Association.

| | First Edition, p. 17. | | | 2d or new Ed. p. 20. | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | <i>l.</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> | <i>l.</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
| For lying with a Woman in the Church, and there committing other Enormities, | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| For gross and wilful Perjury, | - | 0 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| For a Layman for murdering a Layman, | 0 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| But, for laying violent Hands on a Priest, though without shedding Blood | - | 0 | 10 | 6 | 0 | 5 |
| For defiling a Virgin, | - | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| For a Priest or Clergyman keeping a Concubine | 0 | 10 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| For committing Incest, | - | 0 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| But, for forging the Pope's Hand-writing | 1 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 6 | 0 |

See Taxa S. Cancellariæ Apostolicæ. — See N^o. 2. of the Appendix to the aforesaid History of Sir Richard Steele.

only this—The person guilty came to his confessor, to relieve his conscience of a burden ; the holy father enjoined him penance, and repentance for his sins ; and if he had robbed, cheated or defrauded, or any way deceived his neighbour, straitway to make him reparation *, and pay the fee established by the church ; and if he repented him sincerely of the crime, then, in the name of God, does he absolve him : — but this man coming forth from his confessor, being suspected or accused, might, and still may, be arrested by the civil power, and tried ; and if found guilty, punished or executed as the law should direct :— whether the crime committed be towards a Papist or an Heretic.

The absurdity of concluding, that absolution was an exemption of the civil law, and, at any time to be obtained for the trivial gratuity of a few shillings, is so contrary to all common sense and reason, that it is scarcely credible any one can be so weak as to credit it. What would become of that state, where every enormity could be committed under the protection of, and screened from justice by, a purchased absolution ? It could not subsist a twelve-month ; all would be anarchy and confusion ; for of

* Some years ago, when I was at Genoa, where I resided a while in the house of an English Protestant gentleman, he received one morning a small packet, which, on opening, contained some money, with a note, of the following purport :

“ S I R,

“ A Person who came to me to confession, acknowledged to
 “ have defrauded you of the inclosed sum ; and it is from his
 “ authority I return it you—Please to make no further En-
 “ quiries.”

(No Signature.)

what

what use would be the civil law if subject to the controul of religious tenets, acting in opposition to its doctrine. If every murderer, housebreaker, &c. could pursue his iniquities, in defiance of the laws, by flying to confession, it were a folly to have enacted any laws at all. It is evident therefore, how inconsistent and malicious these assertions are.

And as a further proof of a disposition to mislead us, why so artfully, in the pretended extract of the fees of the Roman Chancery *, insert the word "but" in the fourth article, "for laying violent hands on a Priest?" — And again, "though" — "without shedding blood?" — And in the last article again, "But—for forging the Pope's hand-writing?" — Surely these monosyllables are not to be considered as part of these extracts; and if so, how artfully and designedly are they not thrown in, to bias and mislead the judgment of the people! But admitting them as critical remarks only, let us consider and examine them more minutely.— The fourth article, "for laying violent hands on a Priest," &c and the last, "for forging the Pope's hand-writing," appear to be much more considerable than any of the others; at which a sarcastic fling is most evidently intended; yet, surely, every impartial person will admit, that the first and most important point, to inculcate in the minds of the people, is a due respect for the clergy, without which their preaching will have no avail. And, secondly, nothing can have a

* Vide Appeal from Protestant Association, or p. 5. of this pamphlet (note.)

more serious tendency than forgery in the name of the supreme magistrate and head of the church: for though these crimes are, in themselves, more trivial than murder, perjury, &c. yet are they, politically considered, of more dangerous consequence to the state.

The respect enforced to our superiors will induce us to respect their laws; and when that pre-eminence is lost, the laws will lose their force. And all this farther serves to prove a previous position, that absolution is no exemption of the civil law; for it is impossible to suppose the Pope would excuse the culprit, guilty of a crime against his person, because he had confessed himself, and received absolution from his Priest.

Thus, having clearly refuted every assertion of importance hitherto, I shall conclude this chapter with observing, that having repeatedly heard, without doors, certain insinuations, that those who were the promoters of the toleration of Papists were Popishly inclined, I shall only add, that they equally promoted the toleration of Dissenters.

C H A P. II.

THE second section opens with an enumeration of references to certain acts that *were* in force against the Papists. By that of the 11th and 12th of William III. c. 4. any person convicting a Bishop, Priest, or Jesuit, of exercising any part of his ecclesiastical function, "*was,*" say our Editors, (for this is now repealed) entitled to the reward of 100 l." This, they seem most sincerely to regret. However, the several references serve to prove two things; and first, though they might be just and wholesome laws at the time they were enacted; from the alteration of the times, having become unnecessary, it would be persecution to a degree to continue them; and therefore, with equal wisdom, and greatly to the honour and humanity of our rulers, they are now repealed.

And secondly, the desire so evidently testified on the part of these Editors, and in the name of the Association, to have these oppressive laws, against a loyal and well-meaning people, continued in full force, shews a persecuting spirit, incompatible with the meekness of the Gospel, and Christian benevolence.

The observation that our forefathers "were better judges of what *was* necessary for the future security of the British constitution than we of this
" gene-

“ generation (who, thanks to a kind Providence !) have had *no such experience*,”——corroborates my assertion, that such laws are become unnecessary.

The promoters of the late repealing statute cannot be supposed ignorant of all that history sets forth relative to Popery; but they were so well convinced and satisfied how different were the past to the present times, and the probability of those to come, that it was no sooner proposed, than it passed unanimously through the Senate.

But we are told that these laws, when in force, were executed with lenity and moderation, which further proves that they were become unnecessary, and therefore ought to be, as they have been, repealed; for it is a certain proof, that the Papists did not incur the penalty inflicted thereby, or that lenity and moderation would not have been shewn them, since we might as well be without laws, if they are to be infringed with impunity.

That these laws were mild, in comparison with those in force against Protestants in foreign countries, is surely no Christian argument against the principle of toleration. Rather let us endeavour to turn their hearts by a generous example of benevolence, that does honour to human nature.

The well-timed severity of the laws may produce salutary effects, but that end answered, it would be tyranny to continue them.

That

That no application was made by Papists to repeal those laws, shews how little they were disposed to be turbulent, and is a strong argument in their favour; which was, no doubt, so considered by those who have deservedly acquired the praises of mankind, and the blessings of heaven too, I hope, for their generous exertions in favour of TOLERATION !

C H A P. III.

IN the third section we find the act of William III. more particularly adverted to, and animadverted upon; but most of all does it excite the regret of these Editors, to find the reward of 100 l. (so temptingly held out to every informant for the discovery and conviction of any Bishop, Priest, or Jesuit, performing his ecclesiastical function, &c.) among other *less important* points, repealed.

To speak candidly, this, as well as many other acts, at the time it was enacted, was, perhaps, right, because it was necessary. Although there had been a long contest between the Papal chair and the King's supremacy; yet the vanquished had not altogether given up their hopes of recovering their former influence and power; which sentiment, diffused among those of the Roman Catholic persuasion, rendered them enthusiastic, turbulent, and dangerous; and these laws, judicious as they then were, became necessary to the safety of the state. But the growth of Popery in the present age is a mere chimera; it is a hackneyed theme, that has been harped upon too long; and scarcely a school-boy throughout the kingdom but treats it with derision and contempt. Therefore, the repealing act of 18 George III. was thought expedient, and, to the no small honour of Majesty, graciously met the royal fiat.

The insinuation thrown out against the Jesuits falls to the ground of course; out-casts of Popish countries,

countries, what advantage to be derived from an exertion of their influence here ?

The Papists of Ireland have shewn themselves as zealously attached to the crown and constitution of this kingdom as any of his Majesty's most loyal subjects; and are now as ready to take up arms in its defence as any of the Protestants of this realm, for it is become their interest so to do.

That landed influence, once indeed the danger of the state, is now its best security; their welfare is cemented with, and must increase from, its prosperity; they will never seek their own ruin by its adversity.

As to what is said to be apprehended from the education of our youth in Popish seminaries, it is, to say no more, a very vague notion. No Protestant of rank, nor in the middling station of life, would ever think of sending their children to be educated in such principles.

The oath of allegiance administered to Papists is drawn up consistent with a regard to truth, humanity, and conscience; it is no more than *we* may reasonably expect, and *they* with propriety conform to.—The absurdity of administering an oath, incompatible with the principles and conscience of the party, is not only self-evident, but it is a breach of humanity, and an infringement on the natural and religious rights of mankind; there is surely no extortion

tortion upon earth to be considered as so great a crime.

To search into the records of ancient laws for grounds to prosecute the Papists, would, indeed, be an act of propense malice, and it is to be hoped would be held as such by every court of justice in this kingdom, since it is evidently *contrary to the intent of the late act*, as it is to humanity itself, to countenance such prosecutions.

The encouragement, or invitation, said to be held out in this act towards the Roman Catholics, if to be understood as such, is only placing them in this respect upon an equal footing with foreigners of every denomination, country, and religion, and is conformable to the true spirit of toleration. Still, to satisfy the most scrupulous of our impartial countrymen, they are particularized by an oath of allegiance, sufficient to release the most anxious from their apprehensions.

Our Editors advert to the last section of this repealing statute, wherein it is provided, “ That
 “ nothing in that act should be construed to extend
 “ to any Popish Bishop, Priest, Jesuit, or School-
 “ master, who shall not have taken or subscribed
 “ the oath, before a prosecution shall have been com-
 “ menced against him :” — which shews that such as do not conform thereto are liable to the penal statute ; but, how it can imply, as he asserts, “ That
 “ it was expected by the legislature, that Popish
 “ Bishops, Priests, Jesuits, and Schoolmasters, would
 “ now

“ now resort hither,” &c. is what, I confess, I cannot understand.— I can see no such implication in that passage.—And, I am sorry to say, it is a forced construction, which carries all the appearance of the most ill-grounded malevolence.

The event of the contest between the church of Rome and that of the reformed, was, at one time, very doubtful; but the latter, at last, prevailed; still, while there remained an equal number nearly in these realms of each persuasion, it was needful, in order to crush it effectually, to enact certain laws for the more ample protection of the established church; and such as were enacted produced the natural and desired effect; Popery declined daily, and, like a taper burning downwards, after various efforts, is now expiring in the socket; to rake among the embers is but to revive the flame.

Howsoever licensed the Papists may be, by the late act, to teach and preach up the doctrine they profess, it will most assuredly produce no converts among Protestants: what recent instances they can have given by their conduct of any such sentiments or intentions of attempting it, I confess myself ignorant: but, as to the “ fatal consequences to posterity,”—it is a notion most evidently chimerical.

Our ancestors were, undoubtedly, right, in enacting laws, that so effectually destroyed the power and influence of Roman Catholics in these realms, by disabling them from purchasing, and incapacitating them

them from inheriting landed property, &c. but the case is now evidently different from what it was. The repealing the severity of these laws will produce the most salutary effects.—We live in a more enlightened age; Papists themselves are not those bigots to enthusiasm they once were; and these acts of lenity towards them, so consistent with Christianity, will open their eyes more effectually, and at all events endear them to the crown and the constitution of this realm.

The oath of Supremacy of Geo. I. Stat. 2. c. 13. is consistent with the sentiments and principles of all Protestant subjects, but it is a violation to the conscience of every Papist, which never could be reconciled, and therefore contrary to all religion, justice, and humanity, to enforce it.

Toleration is consistent with the true spirit of this constitution. The free exercise of liberty of conscience is the just and natural claim of every individual; and where is that Englishman, boasting of his liberty, that would wrest it from a Papist?

Besides the sin and wickedness in requiring oaths, knowingly inconsistent with conscience, what security can be proposed from such compulsion?

These were the reflections and incentives, no doubt, of those generous and benevolent beings, who new-modelled the oath of allegiance, to answer all its just purposes, without wounding the conscience of a single individual,

The

The very slovenly manner of hurrying through an oath, as our appellars justly insinuate, in our courts of justice, &c. is certainly an indecorum, to say no worse, which is injurious to truth, morality and religion, and calls loudly to the legislative power for redress. But this is surely no reasonable or just evasion for the party to avail himself of, nor would it serve, if found acting in contradiction thereto, to screen the offending person from justice. Besides, what an absurdity, what an inconsistency is it, in them, to be thus talking of these pitiful evasions of oaths, taken by Roman Catholics, when they had before asserted that they make no scruple of breaking them ?

Thus far, I believe, will appear obvious to every impartial reader, that *Persecution*, is obnoxious to the British Constitution, and *Toleration* the best antidote to *Papery*.

C H A P. IV.

THE assertion at the opening of the fourth section, that the bill for the relief of the Papists was brought into the House in the most private manner, at the end of a session, to a thin House,—is evidently groundless; since the bill did not pass under the space of one fortnight, from the time of proposing it; —if it was of so much importance, there was surely time enough for such members as had retired to their country-seats to have received notice, and have returned to town, with the sense of their constituents, to oppose it, if thought necessary; —but it is certain this bill was patronized by, and passed with a full House:—and when it is further considered, that this bill was introduced and seconded by those who are the most strenuous supporters of our liberties, we can surely have no room to suspect any undue influence or sinister views.—That “the Bishops were tender of appearing enemies to Toleration,” is, without our editors’ intending it as such, a high panegyric on that Bench; of which, by the Bill’s meeting with the concurrence of most, and passing without opposition from any present, they have shewn themselves truly deserving.

As we advance toward refinement, we increase in philanthropy. The present prevailing spirit of Englishmen, God be praised, is the generous spirit of bene-

benevolence, founded on that golden maxim, which is an ornament to the Christian religion, of “ doing as we would be done by.”—Experience has shewn us, that the fatal effects of fanaticism served but to raise new victims to the cruelty of oppression. Ignorance and prejudice have unveiled themselves before us, and the film which impeded our sight is removed; we look back to past errors with astonishment and regret;—a thorough conviction, and free toleration, secure us for ever from the horrors of persecution on either side, whilst Papists learn moderation by the advantages they reap from its blessed effects.

Scotland lies more north, and is behind-hand with us at least a century; the oblique rays of benevolence, like those of the Sun, have not yet warmed their hearts, or brought their imaginations to maturity; but if she once blazes with splendor from the throne of Majesty, she will soon diffuse her genial warmth to the most distant regions of his empire.

The Papists were by no means rendered firm in their allegiance by those laws which were enacted and put in force against them; it was no natural attachment, but they were compelled, and had not the power to resist;—and this was necessary in those turbulent times; but it is now our business to conciliate their affections. And it is plain that nothing can be apprehended from it.—Scarcely is it beyond our own memories, when people were taken up on the most ridiculous and frivolous pretences, publicly tried and condemned as witches, to be burnt.—A strong proof of the folly and superstition of the age, yet no

one will be so absurd as to think it necessary to provide a check to prevent its return.

That it is an alarming circumstance, for Protestants to be indebted in these days to the arms of Papists for support, is as ridiculous as to say, that England should not be indebted to North Britons for their assistance : there was a time when it might have been dangerous, that time is past ; they are an inferior power, if considered separately ; and were it otherwise, their interests are so blended with our own, that the support of each becomes a common cause : the comparison will appear obvious to every one, and therefore needs no animadversion : the spirit of toleration diffuses its benevolence to all around without distinction, and is satisfied with that return of gratitude, prompted by generosity, and seconded by interest ; — leaving the important decision of religious principles to him who is the only judge of right and wrong ; who knows the most secret recesses of our hearts ; who will poise the scale of justice with mercy, and distribute his rewards and punishments accordingly.

The papal supremacy is not incompatible with a democracy ; and infallibility is but figurative, as we say, “ The King can do no wrong.” —

As to the annual custom of excommunication at Rome, it is an established form, like some others equally ridiculous in our own church, which are even disapproved by the clergy, and neglected by the laity ;

laity ; within hearing, and under the very nose of episcopacy.

If Papists “ are building, purchasing, and hiring “ buildings for mass houses, and setting up schools “ and seminaries of learning, in different parts of “ this metropolis and kingdom,”—we may presume it is for their own convenience only ; and if with other sinister views, it has been already shewn how fallacious are such views, and how abortive the attempt must prove : — the assertion, that “ they even insult “ Protestant Ministers in the discharge of their duty,” —is, to be sure, a very serious charge, and, I confess, altogether new to me ; but it is not without remedy, if it can be proved.

If all the books in favour of Popery, that ever were written, were printed and published *by permission* in London, there is not the least probability that they would tincture the minds of a single individual worth gaining ; but, on the contrary, in an age so enlightened as the present, when every one maintains the right of thinking freely for themselves, it would certainly produce a quite contrary effect.

It is, indeed, judging prematurely to suppose posterity will feel any evil consequences from the present toleration ; and still more so is it to assert, that they are only cautious at present, in order to carry a deep laid scheme more effectually into execution at a future period.

The educating of our children in their persuasion is, it is to be hoped, the event will prove, an erroneous

neous opinion; and it is ridiculous to suppose, that the number of Papists should increase in this kingdom to that degree, as to endanger the established church and constitution, by the influence of their landed property.—It is a fundamental basis of our constitution, to exclude of every religion, or sect whatever, except those of the established church of England, from sitting in Parliament, or serving in any office of civil magistracy under the Crown; and this will sufficiently exclude even the very idea of Roman Catholics, Dissenters, or other sects, from obtaining influence in either House.—And as to the insinuation, that Papists may have dispensations for oaths; and, by sophistical argument, imagine no sin in professing themselves Protestants, to promote more effectually the ends of Popery; was there the least colour of truth for such an assertion, it would assuredly have taken place long since; for the wisest government cannot frame laws to prevent such perjuries and abuses, though they may find means to punish them when committed, if discovered.

Artfully therefore, to stir up the minds of the people, by such false arguments, to imagine the most melancholy and improbable events, is to sow the seeds of dissension and discord, and to revive the horrors of a persecuting spirit throughout this happy kingdom.

The King's supremacy, as head of the church, comes next in point to be considered, and is certainly
to

to be understood as relative to Protestant subjects only, being naturally separate from, and totally independent of, that of allegiance; — therefore the wisdom of the legislature, perceiving the inconvenience, not to say injustice, of the oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and abjuration, comprehended them, as our Appealers very justly observe, under one form, to accommodate the Papists. — The words “ecclesiastical or spiritual”—are properly omitted; for who would attempt to bind a person by oath contrary to their conscience, and the tenets of the religion they profess? And what dependance could be placed on those who were in a manner compelled to be guilty of such gross, such palpable, and manifest perjuries?—The most tyrannical despot would blush at the thoughts of tyrannizing thus over the consciences of men; — surely it is inconsistent with the liberty we boast of, and the true spirit of the British constitution: and accordingly, with truly becoming lenity and moderation, and keeping still in view the power and authority of Majesty, the words “temporal and civil” are substituted in the oath for “spiritual and ecclesiastical,”—which answers all the purposes of allegiance to the Crown, the succession, and constitution of the realm, without presuming to infringe on the natural rights of conscience and private opinions: thereby not yielding up the King’s supremacy, or spiritual prerogative in the church over the kingdom at large, nor yet acknowledging tacitly, or otherwise, as falsely represented, “the “spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Pope.” —But the consequent position of our Authors, that

“ perjury is imposed on every Protestant necessitat.
 “ ed to take the oath of supremacy appointed to be
 “ taken by the Stat. of Geo. I.” is an artful and
 pitiful sophism, that is indeed beneath refutation.

Every Protestant is justly required to admit of no foreign ecclesiastical or spiritual authority within these realms, but this can never be reasonably expected of a Papist, who in conscience is of another persuasion; nor can we in justice claim a right so essentially contrary to the liberties and privileges of mankind, and the tenets of Christianity: — while they abide by, and conform to, the temporal and civil jurisdiction of these realms, they are good and faithful subjects of the Crown, and useful fellow citizens, and are, deservedly, to be considered and treated as such; — and this alteration in the oath of allegiance for Papists nowise invalidates *that* to be taken by Protestants; nor is, in any respect, inconsistent with the most scrupulous conscientiousness of the one, any more than of the other, since each is only personal.

It is unjust, unreasonable, inhuman, impolitic, despotic, and unchristian, to presume to fetter the mind, and dictate to the consciences of others; let us, in God’s name, on the contrary, rather set a Christian example of moderation, benevolence, and humanity; — let us study those principles, and that religion, which teach us to live in peace and good fellowship with each other; and this is undoubtedly to be effected by the Christian spirit of TOLERATION.

C O N C L U S I O N.

IT may be necessary to apologize to my readers for the several repetitions he will have met with on the same subject, in the course of the preceding pages ; but the truth is, I have followed my Editors as close as possible, through all their turnings, windings, and labyrinths, wherein they often ingeniously harp upon the same thing, in order to place their arguments in as many points of view as a jeweller would add faces to a bad diamond, to give it lustre, and by the number to confuse the judgment.

It has been my business to refute them as they occurred ; and herein I hope it will be thought I have not altogether failed. If from what I have said I should be happy enough to convince only one of my countrymen of the sin and wickedness of a persecuting spirit, and expand his heart, unveil his prejudices, and open his perceptions to the blessings of Toleration, it will amply repay me for the little trouble I have taken ; and I shall ever consider it as one of the greatest blessings of my life.

To draw religious inferences from the insidious conduct of our natural enemies, is absurd to a degree. The leading maxim of the House of Bourbon is universal empire. The present contest is, who shall ride the seas triumphant. Our title to it is disputed, and time only will decide this important

tant event, big with the fate of Europe. Let us then, at least, endeavour to deserve, in some degree, the favour of Heaven; let us condemn the vices of our enemies, but emulate their virtues; let us shew them an example worthy of their imitation; convince them that we wage no war from motives of ambition, envy, hatred, or malice, but in justification and defence only of our rights, properties, and privileges, as Englishmen, Let us not again promote religious dissensions, and deluge this land once more with massacres and bloodshed; and, by these horrid deeds, draw down upon our guilty heads the just vengeance of an offended Being; but rather let us deprecate his wrath, for the sins with which we already abound, and endeavour to wipe them away as much as possible, by the tears of sorrow and contrition, carrying ourselves with all humility, benevolence, humanity, and brotherly love, as brethren, countrymen, fellow-citizens, and Christians, towards each other, and herein “doing as we would be done by.” — Let the fatal effects, by melancholy experience teach us to avoid in future the horrors of a civil war inflamed by religion. — It is not for us to controul the sentiments and opinions of mankind, or to dictate to them what mode of worship they shall pursue towards the Supreme. He has reserved unto himself alone to dive into the recesses of the hearts of men; to judge of their secret sentiments and religious actions; and he will bestow rewards upon the good with gladness, and inflict punishments upon the bad, kindly tempered with mercy and regret.

To ask what meritorious actions of the Papists entitle them to the lenity and favour of government, is absurd:—are none entitled to such favours but those who have done some great or worthy act? I fear the measures of this association would but ill entitle its members to that claim!—In a society supported by certain laws, each individual justly claims their protection; it is enough that they conform to their dictates, and fulfil the duties of their station, to be useful members of the community. And what would be our situation upon earth, if God expected more of us? Great actions can be expected only from the exalted few; and must the multitude then perish? — God forbid! — This would be making a monster of the Deity! one who could not be satiated with revenge, rather than a Being swayed by clemency, and delighting in acts of mercy and forgiveness.

The prejudice of opinion in matters of religion led men to superstition, persecution, and bloodshed; of which it is too melancholy a truth, the reformed church hath been also guilty, as well as that of the church of Rome.

To say nothing of the imprisonments, confiscations, and cruelties committed at home, which are too well known to enumerate; we need only refer, among many others, to the ridiculous quarrel which brought about the reformation of Berne, and produced the most horrible and sacrilegious effects; and is, at the same time, of religious histories, one of the most particular and best authenticated.

The number of pastoral instructions, which, at different times, have been poured in upon us against Popery, by certain divines, mislled, to say no worse, by the blind rage of party prejudice, are to be considered as little less than so many anathemas and defamatory libels; which are an indelible disgrace to those Reverend Prelates, who, as professors, should be the teachers and promoters of Christianity.

May it please God to turn their hearts, and open their eyes to the duties of their calling, studying themselves, and promulgating unto others, the meekness of the Gospel; and walking with all humility as humble imitators in the steps of our blessed Saviour, who inculcated the Christian religion, not by dissensions and discord, persecutions, massacres, and bloodshed, but by humility and soft persuasion, benevolence and toleration.

To the Editors of this Appeal, and to this Association, and to all others, so unhappily disposed, let us recommend this saying, "Go, and do thou likewise:"—And let us trust the event to that God, who will give us no cause to repent our good actions.

When the rays of philosophy first beamed forth on mankind, the error of witches was exploded, and the persecution of them ceased. When Toleration shall have diffused itself throughout these kingdoms, and persecution shall be justly held in universal detestation, the folly of superstition and the errors of Popery will die away, and be no more!



